

REMARKS

Claims 7 and 9-31 are currently pending. Claims 8 and 37-43 were previously cancelled. Claims 1-6, 32-36, and 44-55 have been previously withdrawn.

The September 11, 2006 response to the previous Office Action provides a concise overview and advantages of the invention.

In the previous response, dated September 11, 2006, Applicant showed how the combination of the Background section of the application and Blad (Pub. 2001/0048374) did not suggest any slot machine tracking system where a location in a casino is entered into the database system, and all the slot machines that have occupied that particular location are then identified in a report generated by the database system. The main purpose of such a feature is to compare the relative performances of all the slot machines at that location to determine the optimal machine for that location. Dependent Claim 11 recites the step of reporting the performance of the different slot machines at a particular location.

Even though a prior art casino system can likely use a database to know which slot machine is **presently** at a particular location, such databases in casinos do not enable a casino to obtain a report on all slot machines that have previously occupied a particular location, in response to an operator simply entering the particular location identifier into the system.

One aspect of the invention is the nonobvious realization that it is valuable to a casino to be easily able to identify all slot machines that have occupied a particular location.

The Blad system does not enable a user to enter a location identifier in the database and identify all machines that have occupied that location. There is absolutely no suggestion for the Blad system to have that feature since the Blad system is for monitoring the performance of the machines only at their present locations.

In response to Applicant's argument that the Background section and Blad did not suggest the above-mentioned feature of a casino tracking method, the examiner now cites Moore (US 7,084,737) and combines Moore with the Background section and Blad.

Moore is directed to vending machines that vend products. A customer selects a desired product at a first vending machine. If the desired product is depleted in the first

vending machine, the Moore system automatically determines the closest vending machine that has the desired product and conveys the location to the customer so the customer can then travel to the other vending machine to buy the product. The examiner cites to sections of Moore showing that Moore tracks the present locations of vending machines.

The examiner essentially stated that it would be obvious to track the performance and location of vending machines as the machines are moved to different locations, as taught by Blad and Moore, “in order to solve the problem created when placards are replaced when vending machines are moved from one location to another, as taught by Applicant’s background.”

It is respectfully submitted that the Blad and Moore systems are directed to only the **present** locations of the machines. There is no motivation provided by Blad and Moore for a database that identifies all the machines that have previously occupied a location by entering the desired location into the database. Further, the Moore invention is unrelated to slot machines since it is directed to telling the customer where the closest product can be found when the first vending machine is out of the product. That is the only purpose for Moore monitoring the present locations of the machines. The examiner is using impermissible hindsight in identifying one aspect of Moore, out of context, and using it to modify other prior art in an attempt to piece together Applicant’s Claim 7. Nevertheless, even when all the prior art are combined, the most that is achieved is a way to identify the **current** machine at a particular location. This was the exact same conclusion reached in the previous response to the last Office Action.

The examiner is reminded that casino tracking databases are highly customized and directed to monitoring the present performance of many different types of slot machines at their **current** locations. It is not obvious to add the claimed feature to the casino tracking systems since it is unrelated to monitoring present performance. Since Applicant’s invention of Claim 7 provides a new function which is unrelated to Moore’s vending machine system, Moore adds virtually nothing to the art of record, and the prior art does not suggest the novel function provided by Applicant’s claims.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the Claim 7 and its dependent Claims 9-15 are allowable over the combination of the prior art.

The examiner rejected all the **independent Claims 16, 17, 19, 20, and 26** for essentially the same reasons used to reject Claim 7. Independent Claims 16, 17, 19, 20, 26 are similar to Claim 7 in that they all relate to a computerized casino management method where all the slot machines that have occupied a particular location are identified in a report by simply entering the location identification into the system. This provides a new and valuable way for a casino to optimize the arrangement of the different types of slot machines on the casino floor. The independent claims also recite other steps performed after generating a report of all the slot machines that have occupied a particular location.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are allowable. If the Examiner has any questions, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at 408-382-0480 x202.

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Date of Signature

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